1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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son. It is in no way a religious monument, even though it has three marble Buddhas carved on the reverse side of the pediment. But to the peasants the stone tortoise has become some kind of spirit with the diverse powers of a god of wealth and a healer of eye diseases. The rites performed here are curious. At the New Year those who desire to increase their wealth in the coming year break small copper cash on the back of the tortoise and scatter the pieces around it, as usual burning incense sticks before the deity. Those who suffer from eye trouble take copper coins and twist them in the eye sockets of the tortoise, or rather in the holes where once the eyes existed, for the long performance of the rite has hollowed out the hard granite to a considerable depth.

A large number of these more informal rites not connected with the worship of any recognised deity are intended to alleviate sickness. The Min Chia, though not unaware of the theory of infection and contagion, as their beliefs about leprosy show, still think that religious rites are an effective preventive against epidemics. When there is sickness in the town, usually typhus or typhoid, it is customary to erect a shrine in the street, where musicians play and chant sutras before an altar spread with sweetmeats and flanked with incense burners, as in the New Year festival at a private house. The shrine is moved further up the street after two days and the rites repeated until the entire length has been purified. The householders subscribe to defray the expenses. The same rites are performed if a ghost has been seen in a street, for this is regarded as ill-omened for the inhabitants. Cactus leaves are pinned up on the door lintels during times of sickness, and it is believed that the spirits of disease will not enter a house so protected.

The Min Chia and the Yunnanese Chinese also will never eat the eggs of hens kept by lepers, for it is believed that if

1: Fitzgerald fl-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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one does so one will contract the disease. This curious belief is universal, and great precautions are taken when travelling to make sure that eggs are from a safe source.

It is a fact that the yolk of hens' eggs is the medium in which what is believed to be the germ causing leprosy has recently been successfully cultivated in European laboratories. This discovery, which is as yet not fully confirmed, is of course quite unknown to the Min Chia, and if it proves correct will be a striking instance of popular superstition coinciding with scientific fact. The Min Chia also believe that leprosy is transmitted by flies which have alighted on a leper's sore, and later touch the skin of another person; a belief which may be due to hearsay knowledge of the germ theory. Goitre, which is very common in Yunnan due to the lack of iodine in the water, is believed, curiously enough, to be caused by mental anxiety and worry, perhaps because it mainly attacks the under-nourished poor, who may be expected to be more afflicted with worries than their wealthy neighbours. Snakebite, which is much feared, especially in the rice planting season when the workers must wade in the flooded fields, is believed to be mortal in all cases unless the wound can be quickly and tightly bound with a maiden's hair, a specific usually easily available, as the girls are at work in the field also. These cases where disease is believed to be due to contagion or infection are rare; for the most part illness is attributed to malign or angry ghosts, and the remedy is sacrifice at one of the shrines mentioned above, or the re-orientation of the ancestral tombs if it is believed that the angry ghost of an ancestor is responsible.

The Min Chia do not practise Black Magic and are unaware of its existence. A description of rites such as the making of wax figures and their subsequent destruction to compass the death of an enemy excites surprise, and the inquiry whether foreigners do that sort of thing. On the

5:Graham E-5 (1933, 1941)1942 AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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Ch'iang

times forty days. Later the mother's relatives are invited to a 844
feast and the child is given a name.

When the child is forty days old it is taken to the sacred grove 851
and there is a ceremony which is performed by the priest or *bi bu*.

5. Sickness.

Among the Ch'iang disease is one of the most deadly enemies, 164
for the people know little about the principles of health and sanita- 751
tion. On the first story of the homes are the latrines and the 759
domestic animals, and there are few if any windows excepting those opening into the small front courtyard. The unsavory air and smells constantly rise into the living-rooms above. The air is smoky and the windows small. The habit of spitting on the floor means that the floor is covered with germs. In addition there is the night-soil of the dogs, cats, chickens and sometimes goats. Children playing on the floor get the germs on their fingers and then into their mouths. Sweeping stirs the dust and it is breathed into people's lungs. Fleas, flies, lice, and bedbugs spread disease. Smoke causes eye-troubles, and colds in winter-time sometimes turn into pneumonia. Epidemics of measles, smallpox, typhoid and other diseases spread through the villages. Sickness is so common that a foreign visitor is constantly appealed to for medicine.

The people often use medicine, but they frequently misuse it and it often causes death. Some of the practitioners who call themselves doctors are worse than useless. A Ch'iang friend told the writer that his daughter had a discharge in one of her ears. He called a local doctor who washed out the ear by squirting cold unboiled water into it. The child died next day with severe pains in her head.

It is believed that all diseases are caused by demons, so when 753
people become ill they often call the priest to exorcise the demon that is causing the disease.

6. Death and Burial.

As soon as it is known that a person is dead, there is weeping 764
with tears. The newest and best clothing of the deceased is put on, and the corpse is placed in a wooden coffin. For two or three days it is left in the home, after which it is carried out and buried or cremated. A priest performs the ceremony of opening the way.

Formerly cremation was the one way of burial, but in recent 761
years burial in graves has become customary in villages where 177

Mewu

when I noticed that my questions seemed suspicious to the Fantzu, 186
and take up the thread another time or with another person. In 771
many respects I might have penetrated more deeply into a /43/ 124
knowledge of the religious thinking of the nomads if I had questioned
a lama, and perhaps I would have been better informed. But in that
case I could not have avoided getting the viewpoint of the priest, and
would not have learned what were the most important things in the re-
ligious life of the laymen.

Chinese and Tibetan folk religions are very closely related. In 771
both cases religious thinking centers around a belief in spirits, nature
demons and the souls of the dead. Therefore the most important re-
ligious acts consist in propitiating these spirits which are everywhere,
and in warding off the misfortune they might cause. This belief in
spirits and the rituals accompanying it are, in both folk religions,
combined with a very primitive belief in magic and with many other
superstitions.

The Mewu-Fantzu distinguish between actual evil spirits (Tibetan: 772
djäxe-dan or djir-dan) and the spirits of the dead which correspond to 753
the Chinese kuei (Tibetan: dzeo). The evil spirits cause sickness of
man and beast, and sometimes loss of money or war, against which
in the folk religion the sorcerer (bŏm-bu, see below) must intervene
(he corresponds to the Chinese exorcist), or the lama in the religion of
Lamaism.

The kuei can bring the same kind of misfortune. Above all are
feared the spirits of those who were killed in war or who met with
some other violent form of death. The Mewu-Fantzu also believe
in the existence of headless spirits which are particularly feared. As
among the Chinese, there are people who believe they can see ghosts.

If a kuei brings on an illness, the victim is possessed by the kuei,
and the bŏm-bu must /44/ drive him out. If the sorcerer has driven
him out but has been unable to destroy him, the kuei likes to station
himself at crossroads. Hence people avoid them, especially at night,
and prefer to make a detour. The souls of the dead which enter into
the body of an animal, according to the Buddhistic belief in the
transmigration of souls, are also feared, especially, as we have said,
if they have died a violent death.

There is also a lively belief in nature demons, - mountain spirits,
earth spirits and water spirits. Earth spirits are everywhere, and
correspond to the t'u-ti-shen of the Chinese. The earth spirit is
called "sa-tja"; like t'u-ti, he has a wife. He lives in the valley,
usually along water. If one offends earth spirits, they can revenge

776 themselves by bringing sickness. If someone is suddenly seized with
753 violent internal pains, it is feared above all that the earth spirits have been offended. You can offend them by scratching up the earth, a belief which is strongly reminiscent of Chinese conceptions regarding feng-shui (geomancy).

778 I did not hear anything among the Mewu-Fantzu about water spirits, but in Labrang there is a sacred spring. Once as I was riding by, I saw four lamas slowly encircle this spring, amid song and drumbeat, a ceremony which is performed when the weather is unfavorable, particularly when it is too wet or too dry.

776 There is also a cult of tree spirits among the sedentary Mewu-Fantzu who live below the timber line.

Of the earth spirits in the narrower sense, we must distinguish mountain spirits. In Tibet, as in China, there are mountains whose spirits or gods are the objects of special veneration. The most notable among these is the Amne Machin range in the northeastern reaches of Tibet, about which little is known. /45/ In the large lamasery of He-tso which lies between Labrang and the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu, a friendly lama, one of the lamasery artists, made for me a beautiful picture of Amne Ma chin as a mounted male god surrounded by numerous other gods. (The picture was unfortunately lost in the chaos of war.)

In the more restricted area of the Mewu-Fantzu the mountain spirits known as "ami" who are pictured as living in the "obo," (1)

1. In re "obo" and "ami" see Rockhill, page 734. "obo" is a Mongolian word.

are the most venerated. It took me a long time and required many conversations before I was able to understand the whole complex of ideas surrounding the obo and its ami.

778 Every mountain on which there stands an obo (Tibetan: lab-dza) is particularly sacred. The obo of the nomadic Mewu-Fantzu consists of a wooden structure into which, year by year, sacrificial wooden darts are stuck, so that the obo looks like a bundle or bouquet of darts often more than two meters high. Twigs of bushes are also stuck into this bundle of darts. The darts vary in size, and may be a meter or more long. Every Fantzu visits the obo at least once a year and takes with him a wooden dart or the branch of a shrub as an offering. The t'ou-mu (chieftain) has the privilege of giving especially long darts. Tufts of sheep wool and khadaks are also stuck into the obo.

● 753 Uganda people of Africa, and many other primitive peoples are all of the same opinion. Like these peoples, the Ch'iang think that diseases are due to the evil influences of ghosts and gods. Since the source of illness is the ghosts and gods, it will be cured only if they are pacified. Therefore, it is unnecessary to take medicines. Deniker, a French anthropologist, remarks that since the primitive peoples believed that illness came from ghosts and gods, sorcerers and others like them were the earliest physicians. Only they could capture the devil inside the patient. (5) This exactly can also be said for the

5. Deniker, Les races et les peuples de la terre, p. 285.

[756] [791] Ch'iang. Whenever a Ch'iang is sick, he asks a tuan-kung to perform a magic cure for him. The Ch'iang themselves agree that the major difference between the Ch'iang and the Han /Chinese/ is that the former, while ill, take no medicine.

All ghosts and gods can cause diseases, but each disease caused by them has its peculiar symptom.

The Poison Devil carries poison with finger nails or eyes. The Ch'iang call it mu-mi-kue-dze ku. Diseases caused by the Poison Devil are swelling of the stomach or stomach-ache, indigestion, discomfort of the whole body, and overeating without gaining weight.

Diseases caused by offending the good gods at home are all diseases in the upper part of the body -- head, eye, ear, nose, mouth, chest, back, shoulder, arm, and hand. They can be cured only by inviting a tuan-kung or by making a vow to pacify the god by the patient himself. Diseases caused by offending the Earth God --Hégni --are all diseases in the lower part of the body, such as paralyzed foot, swollen leg, or lameness. Light illness will disappear by itself. But, for serious illness, a tuan-kung must be invited.

Diseases caused by offending the Forest God are headache, thirst, fever, and chill. The patient must avoid eating and must kill no living things. Those taboos must be observed by the patient's whole family. Even their neighbors are not allowed to make noise with gong and drum. In this way, they believe the patient will recover. If the disease spreads to all family members, the whole family is not allowed to go outside to communicate with others. If they die, beggars will be hired to move them away.

Diseases caused by bad spirits have symptoms like languor, bad dreams, abnormal behavior, aching waist, ulcer, and nameless swelling. When a tuan-kung is invited to cure diseases, he uses a red cock and goes to the local god to perform a one-day service. Diseases

is hung a little flag made of fir wood. At the same time, disciples of other tuan-kung also participate in the performance. But they need only thrust the flag, not the knife /into the mouth/. Only the tuan-kung who has performed the teacher-honoring ceremony is qualified to wear the monkey-skin hat. 791

What is mentioned above gives a general idea of the origin of the tuan-kung, his attirements and instruments, and his magic power and instruction. As to the various functions of the Ch'iang tuan-kung, there are many and it takes a long time to enumerate them all. I shall discuss briefly a few cases in the following chapter dealing with examples of the Ch'iang practices, while a discussion of the details must wait until some other time.

III. Examples of the Ch'iang Practices

The Ch'iang tribesmen believe in ghosts and gods. They are sometimes lenient and sometimes severe. All diseases, poverty, famine, and other misfortunes have something to do with the attitude of those ghosts and gods. Whenever people meet such crises, they ask the tuan-kung for help. The tuan-kung is a person who, on the one hand, deals with ghosts and gods and, on the other hand, promotes the well-being of the people. He has the magic to cure diseases, to exorcise evil spirits, to eliminate plagues, to increase fecundity, and to do many other things. All the Ch'iang believe in such magic. The tuan-kung may also participate in capping, wedding, and funeral ceremonies. However, there are also many other important programs which have nothing to do with the tuan-kung. For instance, the act of praying for rain, which, it seems, ought to be a favorite job of the tuan-kung, is however entirely a practice of the people among the Ch'iang tribesmen. 776 791

Curing Diseases--People who believe in ghosts and gods consider all diseases as caused by their evil workings. Frazer, an English anthropologist, calls the disease which is caused by the evil influence of ghosts and gods "devil-disease." Even today in China there remains the habit of calling all diseases "devil-diseases." This is undoubtedly a custom handed down from ancient times. The Dyak people of Oceania say that diseases are caused by devils that possess the human body, by the attack of evil spirits, or by the capture of one's soul by the devil. The Savara people of India regard all diseases as the evil workings of their ancestors or other ghosts and gods. /19/ Besides, the Winnebago people of America, the 753.

753 caused by the curse of other people can also be cured by asking the tuan-kung to perform service before the local god.

Besides, the Ch'iang believe that strange dreams can too cause diseases. A cow that drinks water or a woman who does not [844] avoid a shadow may also cause diseases. Born in an unlucky hour also can cause diseases (to the baby). If the source of the disease is unknown, the tuan-kung is requested to burn a sheep's thigh-bone with wormwood to discover it by divination. (The method of divination will be discussed elsewhere.)

755 The tuan-kung has different ways to cure diseases. The commonest is the method of supplication and sacrifice, called mŭ-tchi-shōō-tchi-sa-wōō, i.e., substituting sheep for human life. Make a human figure with straws and put on it the patient's hat, clothes and stockings. Take a little tea, flour, and beans; and put them into a paper bag. Next, send the straw man and a sheep together to the graveyard, where the sheep is killed and the straw man burned. Then the tuan-kung prays, saying that the sheep has died for the patient and that the straw man, representing the devil of disease, is riding the sheep to go far away. The patient's relatives are not allowed to eat the meat of this sheep. On his way back, the tuan-kung will call the soul for the patient. Putting a piece of paper on the ground, planting little flags on its corners to represent the ancestors, and placing beside the paper a few moon and sun cakes and in the middle, pine branches, buckwheat, oats, or other grains and lard, the tuan-kung chants the liturgy of calling the soul -- shōō-wo-dio-shuei -- and sees if there is any insect climbing onto the paper. If so, he considers that the soul has returned. (If there is no insect, he uses the lard to paste one on it.) Then, he wraps up the paper and puts it in a basket in which there are a hat, eggs, and other things. A relative of the patient carries the basket and follows the tuan-kung home. On his way back, the tuan-kung points at the hills and streams and calls the soul to return. Arriving at the door, the tuan-kung requests the Door God to open the door and asks, "Has the soul returned?" People inside answer, "Yes." Thus, three times he asks and three times, they answer. Then the tuan-kung sends the wrapped paper to the spirit tablet of the ancestors, /20/ as he beats the drum to declare the conclusion of the service. (If the patient is a female and a woman's long hair is found on the paper when the tuan-kung summons the soul, they regard it as the greatest success. And the patient is going to live several years more than his normal span of life.